

Marshfield/Plainfield Energy Group
Notes of 11/10/08 Meeting
Rich Phillips

Attending: Saul Gresser, Anne Miller, John Morris, Dan Chodorkoff, Rich Aiken, Ed Hutchinson Debra Stoleroff, Joe Gainza

Convene: 7:15 PM

Adjourn: 8:45 PM

Business:

- 1) Joe Gainza explained his concerns for townspeople with financial and other hardships this winter considering the strain that food, fuel and transportation will put on them. He inquired whether the Committee had plans to address this issue. We briefly discussed ways to approach getting the assistance information out to folks that need it. We decided to look first at what we have already committed to and any other new ideas before committing to looking into or implementing a neighbor- to- neighbor program.
- 2) We briefly reviewed the status of the five top projects ranked by Marshfield ECCC last summer (see 6/23/08 Meeting Notes)
 - a. Information for Residents: We completed the Energy Fair, the spring alternative energy home tour, the root cellar tour, Anne is doing a seed saving session at the library and the website work has started. John will work on the website when he has time-very busy. Anyone else willing to help should contact John.
 - b. Municipal Facilities: Rich has not completed any of the facilities but expects to complete the Village and Town facilities this fall. Rich is no longer involved with the Twinfield Energy Review. Michael Raker has taken this over working with two students.
 - c. Transportation: Anne has made several contacts and recommended at the last meeting that we proceed with multi-town meetings between Selectboards and transportation officials from GMTA and maybe AOT to discuss what it would take to get bus service to the towns in the upper Winooski valley. The Committee was not ready for the meetings wanting more information. The Committee clearly wanted the vanpool option further evaluated and promoted and wait some on the bus routes. Anne and Bob will develop a workplan to promote the vanpools and continue to flesh out the information about the possible bus route.
 - d. Assessment of Local Energy Options: No activity has occurred on this project, except for brief discussion of hiring a consultant and reviewing the feasibility of micro-hydro, wind and solar within the Marshfield and potentially surrounding towns. The dam in the Village was mentioned as a possible micro-hydro site. A grant application to the Clean Energy Development Fund was the suggested source of funds. Dan and Saul agreed to be responsible for this evaluation.
 - e. Implementation Assistance: This project has not begun except for the \$500 grant from the NE Grass Roots Environmental Fund for the purchase and loan of electrical meters. We need to resolve whether we want to go ahead with this purchase. The intent of this project was to have a trained team in town to assist people with weatherization or other minor energy matters and provide guidance.
 - f. Zoning and Planning: The intent of this project was to review the town plan and the zoning ordinance from an energy standpoint and make

recommendations to the Planning Commission. Nothing has been done. Rich will ask Annie Reed if she could be our liaison to the Planning Commission and meet with us at an appropriate time so that we could input to the next set of zoning changes.

- g. Other projects exist but are not considered high enough priority to pursue at this time

3 New Ideas:

- a. Seek a grant to supply weatherization materials free of charge to people (no discussion of which people)
- b. Anne suggested an effort be made to engage residents in a discussion and strategizing session(s) concerning localizing the economy in Marshfield. She mentioned local fuel production, the General Store, local jobs, skills exchange, bartering, local currency. She will develop a more structured proposal for next time.
- c. Rich Aiken suggested we relook at the priorities we set last summer given that members are more seasoned now.
- d. Develop a neighbor to neighbor networking and information system to help support residents needing assistance this winter and beyond

4 Tentative New Effort:

In addition to the various efforts we have already committed to as enumerated #2 above we decided to proceed with discussing and possibly implementing a neighbor to neighbor assistance project. Various suggestions were made concerning what actions might be part of this effort. Incorporate Plainfield/Marshfield Skills Directory, publicize the assistance sources in Field Notes, WGDR, and churches, and publicize the 211 hot line for all types of referrals. There already is a list of people willing to help others in an emergency developed by the Selectboard maybe a year or two ago. This could help identify people that might help in financial emergencies brought about by fuel, food and transportation cost increases. Other towns have started neighbor-to-neighbor programs. We hopefully could learn from them. Debra suggested any effort we make be coordinated with Twinfield.

We will dedicate most of our next meeting to developing a scope of this effort and deciding whether to proceed.

5 New Chair Needed:

Rich decided he needed to cut back on efforts on the Energy Committee. He will no longer be Chair after the next meeting and the Committee was asked to decide on a new chair by then. Rich is considering whether to stay on as a member.

6 Next Meeting:

Monday, December 8, 2008 at 6:30 PM at Old Schoolhouse Common in Marshfield.